

Infantry Basic Officer Leader Course Reading List



**“Train The Leader”
2-11th Infantry Battalion
199th Infantry Brigade**



**Maneuver Center of Excellence
Fort Benning, Georgia**



**General Raymond T. Odierno
38th Chief of Staff, Army**

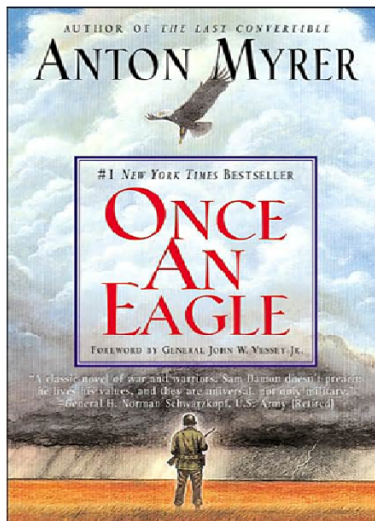
A course of personal study and contemplation is an essential component for the individual development of every Army professional. Each of us faces busy schedules every day and finding time to read and think is a recurring challenge. But even as we train our units and physically condition our bodies, we must improve our minds through reading and critical thinking.

Our Army operates in a complex strategic environment that demands each of us improve our knowledge of not only military affairs, but economics, politics, and international affairs. We must know how to train for new types of missions, how to deploy forces rapidly to distant regions around the world, and how to pursue innovation and change while preserving the Army's core capabilities in an era of fiscal constraint. The books on this list can sharpen our understanding of strategic landpower as an instrument of national power, the indispensable role of ethical leadership, and the extraordinary demands of land combat. I challenge each of you to read these books and to discuss, debate, and think critically about the ideas they contain.

Since 1775 our Army has safeguarded the United States, its allies, and our interests and served as an example of professional excellence. We have succeeded because our Soldiers, families, veterans, and civilians have selflessly trained and prepared themselves in both peace and war. Our Army heritage is distinguished. As we read and study our profession, we create new opportunities to serve our nation today and in the years ahead.

IBOLC Reading List For All Infantry Leaders

Title	Author
<i>Once an Eagle</i>	<i>Anton Myer</i>
<i>The Outpost</i>	<i>Jake Tapper</i>
<i>House to House</i>	<i>SGT David Bellavia and John Bruning</i>
<i>Platoon Leader</i>	<i>COL(R) James R. McDonough</i>
<i>Gates of Fire</i>	<i>Steven Pressfield</i>
<i>No True Glory</i>	<i>Bing West</i>
<i>What is it Like to Go to War</i>	<i>Karl Marlantes</i>
<i>Matterhorn</i>	<i>Karl Marlantes</i>
<i>Infantry Attacks</i>	<i>Erwin Rommel</i>
<i>We Were Soldiers Once... and Young</i>	<i>LTG(R) Harold G. Moore & Joseph Galloway</i>
<i>East of Chosin</i>	<i>Roy E. Appleman</i>
<i>War</i>	<i>Sebastian Junger</i>
<i>The Power of Habit</i>	<i>Charles Duhigg</i>
<i>America's First Battles</i>	<i>Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft</i>
<i>Black Hawk Down</i>	<i>Mark Bowden</i>
<i>Maneuver Warfare Handbook</i>	<i>William S. Lind</i>
<i>A Message to Garcia</i>	<i>Elbert Hubbard</i>
<i>Blackhearts</i>	<i>Jim Frederick</i>
<i>Outlaw Platoon</i>	<i>Sean Parnell</i>
<i>The Defense of Duffer's Drift</i>	<i>E.D. Swinton</i>
<i>The Defense of Jisr Al Doreea</i>	<i>Michael L. Burgoyne & Albert J. Marckwardt</i>
<i>Nightmare on Wazir Street</i>	<i>Center for Army Lessons Learned</i>
<i>Washington's Crossing</i>	<i>David Hackett Fischer</i>
<i>On Combat</i>	<i>LTC(R) Dave Grossman</i>



Taken from the Army Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List

***Once An Eagle* is the story of one special man, a Soldier named Sam Damon, and his adversary over a lifetime, fellow officer Courtney Massengale. Damon is a professional who puts duty, honor, and the men he commands above self interest. Massengale, however, brilliantly advances by making the right connections behind the lines and in Washington's corridors of power.**

Beginning in the French countryside during the Great War, the conflict between these adversaries solidifies in the isolated garrison life marking peacetime, intensifies in the deadly Pacific jungles of World War II, and reaches its treacherous conclusion in the last major battleground of the Cold War — Vietnam.

A study in character and values, courage, nobility, honesty, and selflessness, here is an unforgettable story about a man who embodies the best in our nation — and in us all.

THE OUTPOST

AN UNTOLD STORY OF
AMERICAN VALOR

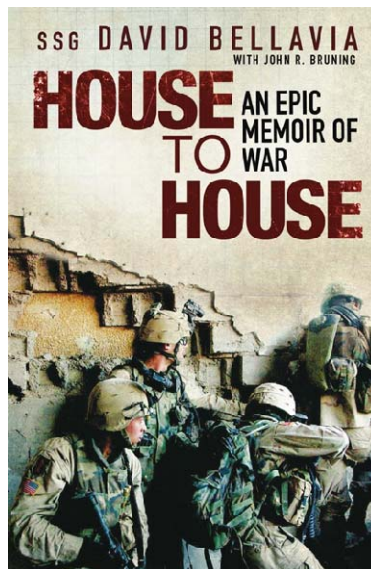


Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

At 5:58 AM on October 3rd, 2009, Combat Outpost Keating, located in frighteningly vulnerable terrain in Afghanistan just 14 miles from the Pakistani border, was viciously attacked. Though the 53 Americans there prevailed against nearly 400 Taliban fighters, their casualties made it the deadliest fight of the war for the U.S. that year. Four months after the battle, a Pentagon review revealed that there was no reason for the troops at Keating to have been there in the first place.

In *The Outpost*, Jake Tapper gives us the powerful saga of COP Keating, from its establishment to eventual destruction, introducing us to an unforgettable cast of soldiers and their families, and to a place and war that has remained profoundly distant to most Americans. A runaway bestseller, it makes a savage war real, and American courage manifest.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com

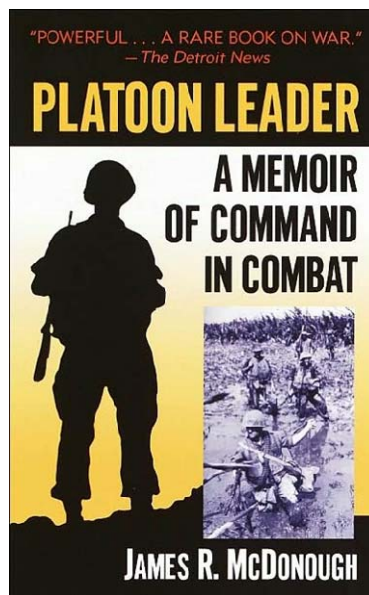


Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

Bringing to searing life the terrifying intimacy of hand-to-hand infantry combat, *House to House* is far more than just another war story. Populated by an indelibly drawn cast of characters, it develops the intensely close relationships that form between soldiers under fire. Their friendships, tested in brutal combat, would never be quite the same. What happened to them in their bloody embrace with America's most implacable enemy is a harrowing, unforgettable story of triumph, tragedy, and the resiliency of the human spirit.

House to House is a soldier's memoir that is destined to rank with the finest personal accounts of men at war. An instant classic in hardcover, this timeless story features a new afterword and a question and answer section with the author.

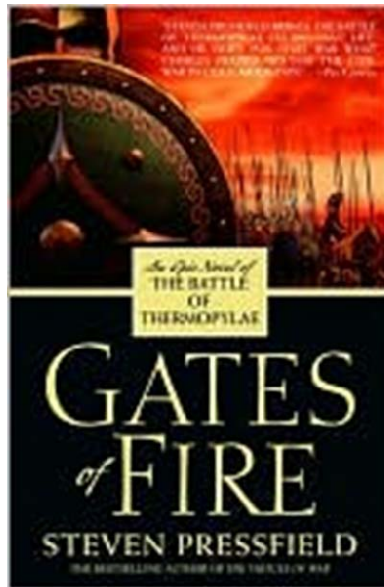
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Taken from the MCOE Reading List

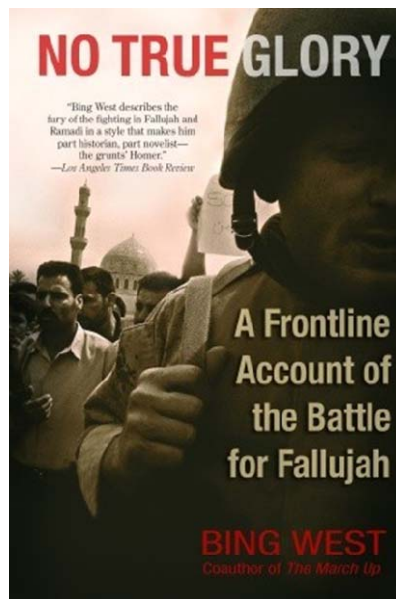
A remarkable memoir of small-unit leadership and the coming of age of a young soldier in combat in Vietnam.'

Using a lean style and a sense of pacing drawn from the tautest of novels, McDonough has produced a gripping account of his first command, a U.S. platoon taking part in the 'strategic hamlet' program. . . . Rather than present a potpourri of combat yarns. . . McDonough has focused a seasoned storyteller's eye on the details, people, and incidents that best communicate a visceral feel of command under fire. . . . For the author's honesty and literary craftsmanship, Platoon Leader seems destined to be read for a long time by second lieutenants trying to prepare for the future, veterans trying to remember the past, and civilians trying to understand what the profession of arms is all about."—*Army Times*



Taken from the MCOE Reading List

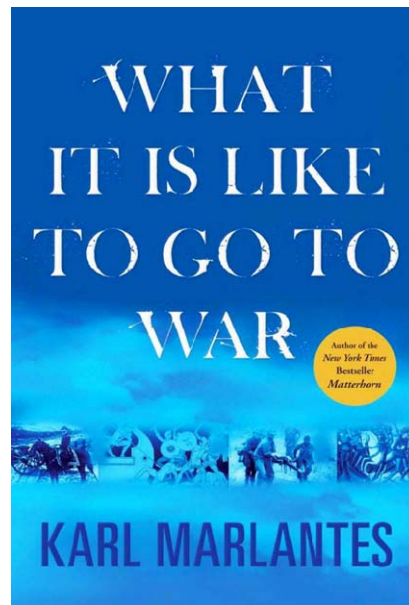
At Thermopylae, a rocky mountain pass in northern Greece, the feared and admired Spartan soldiers stood three hundred strong. Theirs was a suicide mission, to hold the pass against the invading millions of the mighty Persian army. Day after bloody day they withstood the terrible onslaught, buying time for the Greeks to rally their forces. Born into a cult of spiritual courage, physical endurance, and unmatched battle skill, the Spartans would be remembered for the greatest military stand in history—one that would not end until the rocks were awash with blood, leaving only one gravely injured Spartan squire to tell the tale.



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

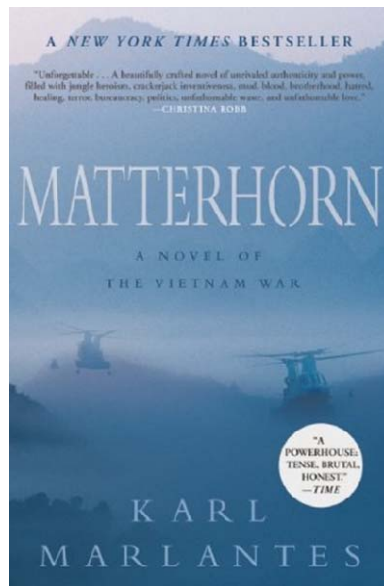
Fallujah: Iraq's most dangerous city unexpectedly emerged as the major battleground of the Iraqi insurgency. For twenty months, one American battalion after another tried to quell the violence, culminating in a bloody, full-scale assault. Victory came at a terrible price: 151 Americans and thousands of Iraqis were left dead. Based on months spent with the battalions in Fallujah and hundreds of interviews at every level—senior policymakers, negotiators, generals, and soldiers and Marines on the front lines—***No True Glory*** is a testament to the bravery of the American soldier and a cautionary tale about the complex—and often costly—interconnected roles of policy, politics, and battle in the twenty-first century.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

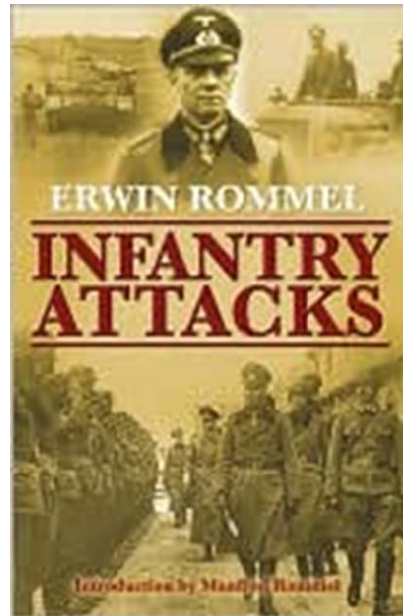
In *What It Is Like to Go to War*, Marlantes takes a deeply personal and candid look at the experience and ordeal of combat, critically examining how we might better prepare our young soldiers for war. War is as old as humankind, but in the past, warriors were prepared for battle by ritual, religion, and literature—which also helped bring them home. In a compelling narrative, Marlantes weaves riveting accounts of his combat experiences with thoughtful analysis, self-examination, and his readings—from Homer to the *Mahabharata* to Jung. He makes it clear just how poorly prepared our nineteen-year-old warriors—mainly men but increasingly women—are for the psychological and spiritual aspects of their journey. synopsis from: www.amazon.com



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

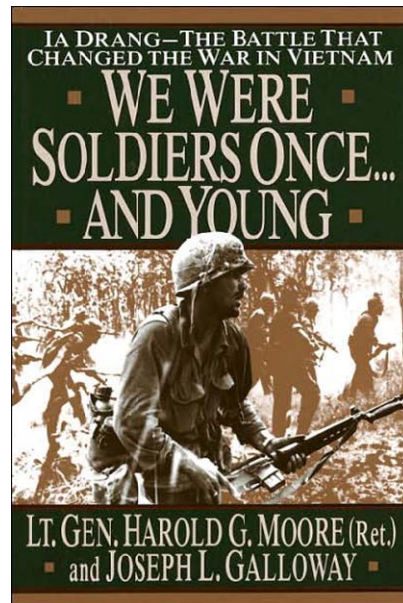
***Matterhorn* is the timeless story of a young Marine lieutenant, Waino Mellas, and his comrades in Bravo Company, who are dropped into the mountain jungle of Vietnam as boys and forced to fight their way into manhood. Standing in their way are not merely the North Vietnamese but also monsoon rain and mud, leeches and tigers, disease and malnutrition. Almost as daunting, it turns out, are the obstacles they discover between each other: racial tension, competing ambitions, and duplicitous superior officers. But when the company finds itself surrounded and outnumbered by a massive enemy regiment, the Marines are thrust into the raw and all-consuming terror of combat. The experience will change them forever.**

synopsis from: www.amazon.com



Taken from the MCOE Reading List

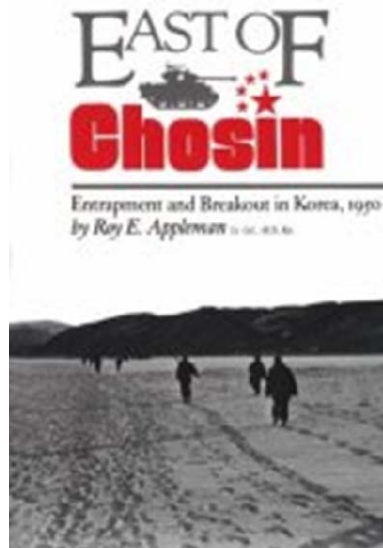
Though most people immediately connect Rommel with the African campaigns of World War II, he made his initial legendary giant steps during the First World War. In this 1935 title, he recalls his greatest battles, outlines how he won them, and provides his strategies on the use of armor in the field lessons ultimately used by Patton and other Allied tank commanders to defeat him.



Taken from the MCOE Reading List

In November 1965, some 450 men of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, under the command of Lt. Col. Hal Moore, were dropped by helicopter into a small clearing in the Ia Drang Valley. They were immediately surrounded by 2,000 North Vietnamese soldiers.

Three days later, only two and a half miles away, a sister battalion was chopped to pieces. Together these actions constituted one of the most savage and significant battles of the Vietnam War. The story of how these men persevered paints a vivid portrait of war at its most inspiring and devastating.



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

In November 1950, U.S. forces had pushed deep into North Korea. Unknown to them, Chinese troops well equipped for below-zero temperatures and blizzard conditions were pushing south. With the 1st Marine Division on the west side of the frozen Chosin Reservoir, the army's hastily assembled 31st Regimental Combat Team, 3,000 strong, advanced up the east side of the reservoir. Task Force Faith in the extreme northern position caught the surprise Chinese attack. With rifles and vehicles often immobilized in the cold and snow, the task force struggled to retreat through a tortuous mountain gauntlet of enemy fire. With truckloads of dead and wounded trapped along the road, a few of the 385 survivors trudged across the frozen reservoir to alert the marines to their plight.

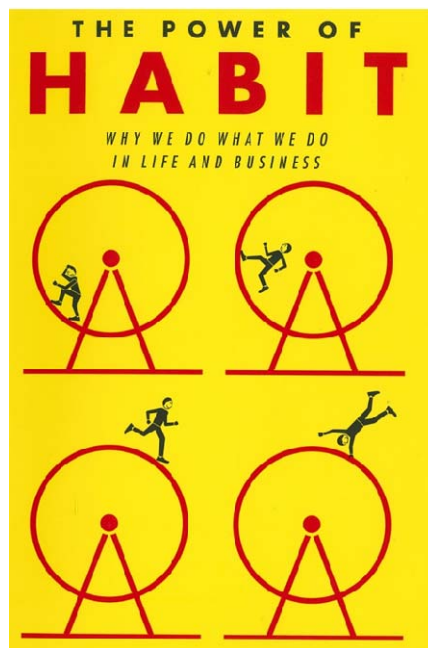
synopsis from: www.amazon.com



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

In *WAR*, Sebastian Junger (*The Perfect Storm*) turns his brilliant and empathetic eye to the reality of combat—the fear, the honor, and the trust among men in an extreme situation whose survival depends on their absolute commitment to one another. His on-the-ground account follows a single platoon through a 15-month tour of duty in the most dangerous outpost in Afghanistan's Korengal Valley. Through the experiences of these young men at war, he shows what it means to fight, to serve, and to face down mortal danger on a daily basis.

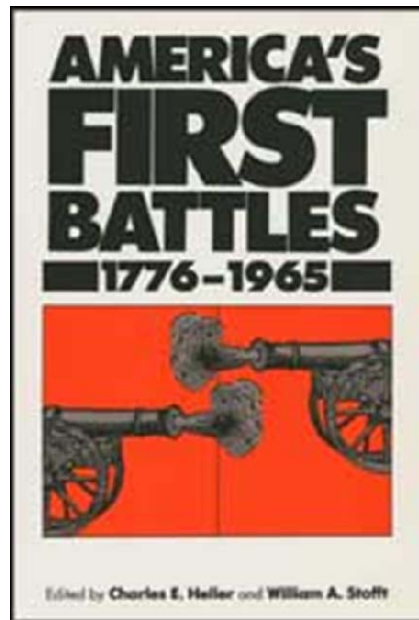
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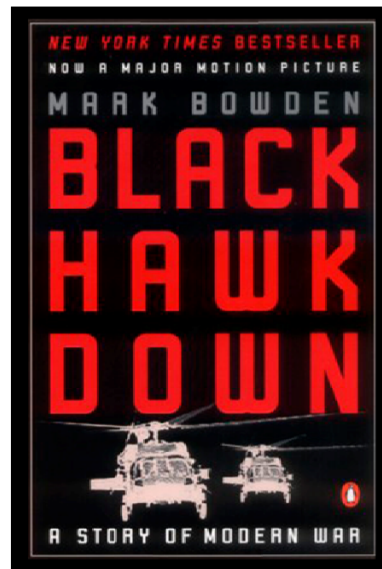
In *The Power of Habit*, Pulitzer Prize-winning business reporter Charles Duhigg takes us to the thrilling edge of scientific discoveries that explain why habits exist and how they can be changed. Distilling vast amounts of information into engrossing narratives that take us from the boardrooms of Procter & Gamble to sidelines of the NFL to the front lines of the civil rights movement, Duhigg presents a whole new understanding of human nature and its potential. At its core, *The Power of Habit* contains an exhilarating argument: The key to exercising regularly, losing weight, being more productive, and achieving success is understanding how habits work. As Duhigg shows, by harnessing this new science, we can transform our businesses, our communities, and our lives.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com



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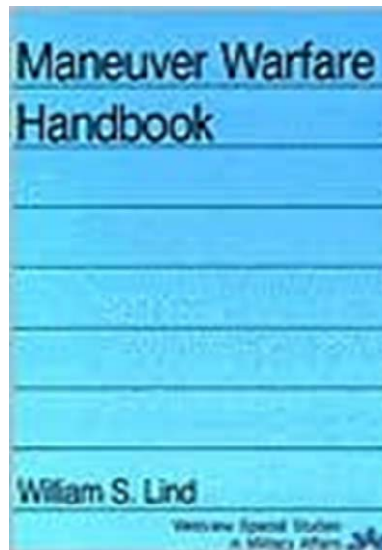
This volume, a collection of eleven original essays by many of the foremost U.S. military historians, focuses on the transition of the Army from parade ground to battleground in each of nine wars the United States has fought. Through careful analysis of organization, training, and tactical doctrine, each essay seeks to explain the strengths and weaknesses evidenced by the outcome of the first significant engagement or campaign of the war. The concluding essay sets out to synthesize the findings and to discover whether or not American first battles manifest a characteristic "rhythm." *America's First Battles* provides a novel and intellectually challenging view of how America has prepared for war and how operations and tactics have changed over time. The thrust of the book--the emphasis on operational history--is at the forefront of scholarly activity in military history.



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

Already a classic of war reporting and now reissued as a Grove Press paperback, *Black Hawk Down* is Mark Bowden's brilliant account of the longest sustained firefight involving American troops since the Vietnam War. On October 3, 1993, about a hundred elite U.S. soldiers were dropped by helicopter into the teeming market in the heart of Mogadishu, Somalia. Their mission was to abduct two top lieutenants of a Somali warlord and return to base. It was supposed to take an hour. Instead, they found themselves pinned down through a long and terrible night fighting against thousands of heavily armed Somalis. The following morning, eighteen Americans were dead and more than seventy had been badly wounded. Drawing on interviews from both sides, army records, audiotapes, and videos (some of the material is still classified), Bowden's minute-by-minute narrative is one of the most exciting accounts of modern combat ever written—a riveting story that captures the heroism, courage, and brutality of battle.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com



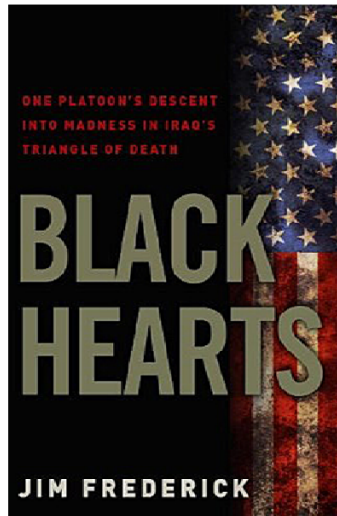
Taken from the MCOE Reading List

Maneuver warfare, often controversial and requiring operational and tactical innovation, poses perhaps the most important doctrinal questions currently facing the conventional military forces of the U.S. Its purpose is to defeat the enemy by disrupting the opponent's ability to react, rather than by physical destruction of forces. This book develops and explains the theory of maneuver warfare and offers specific tactical, operational, and organizational recommendations for improving ground combat forces. The authors translate concepts—too often vaguely stated by maneuver warfare advocates—into concrete doctrine. Although the book uses the Marine Corps as a model, the concepts, tactics, and doctrine discussed apply to any ground combat force.



Taken from the Army Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List

A Message to Garcia is Hubbard's most famous work. In it, he argues that the greatest hero is the man who simply does his job, completing the task no matter what the obstacles. This classic essay from 1899, based on the true story of LT Andrew Rowan, is a notable testament of initiative and responsibility. It provides common sense advice on the importance of personal responsibility, loyalty, hard work, and enterprise. Within Hubbard's lifetime, the "Message" was reprinted more than any book besides the Bible.

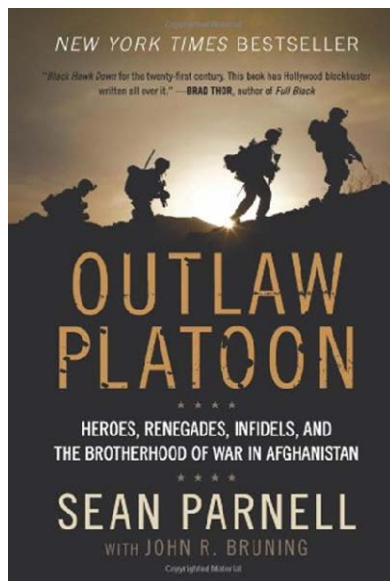


Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

This is the story of a small group of soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division's fabled 502nd Infantry Regiment—a unit known as “the Black Heart Brigade.” Deployed in late 2005 to Iraq’s so-called Triangle of Death, a veritable meat grinder just south of Baghdad, the Black Hearts found themselves in arguably the country’s most dangerous location at its most dangerous time. Hit by near-daily mortars, gunfire, and roadside bomb attacks, suffering from a particularly heavy death toll, and enduring a chronic breakdown in leadership, members of one Black Heart platoon—1st Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion—descended, over their year-long tour of duty, into a tailspin of poor discipline, substance abuse, and brutality.

Black Hearts is an unflinching account of the epic, tragic deployment of 1st Platoon. Drawing on hundreds of hours of in-depth interviews with Black Heart soldiers and first-hand reporting from the Triangle of Death, *Black Hearts* is a timeless story about men in combat and the fragility of character in the savage crucible of warfare. But it is also a timely warning of new dangers emerging in the way American soldiers are led on the battlefields of the twenty-first century.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

A riveting story of American fighting men, *Outlaw Platoon* is Lieutenant Sean Parnell's stunning personal account of the legendary U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division's heroic stand in the mountains of Afghanistan.

Acclaimed for its vivid, poignant, and honest recreation of sixteen brutal months of nearly continuous battle in the deadly Hindu Kesh, *Outlaw Platoon* is a *Band of Brothers* or *We Were Soldiers Once and Young* for the early 21st century—an action-packed, highly emotional true story of enormous sacrifice and bravery.

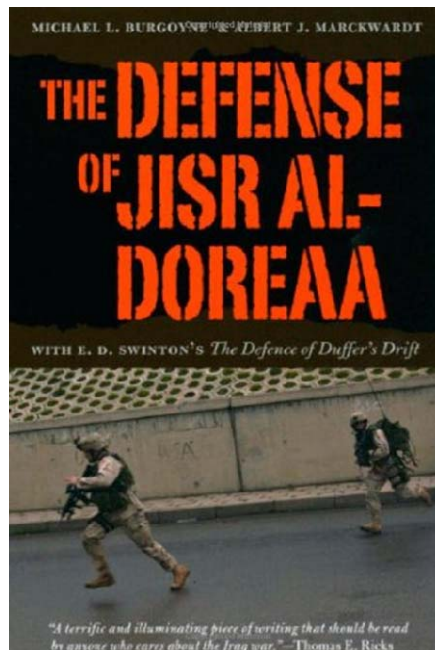
A magnificent account of heroes, renegades, infidels, and brothers, it stands with Sebastian Junger's *War* as one of the most important books to yet emerge from the heat, smoke, and fire of America's War in Afghanistan.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com



Taken from the MCOE Reading List

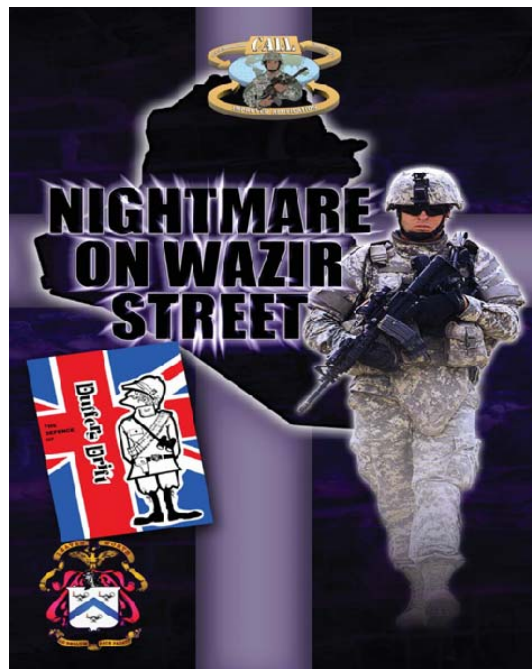
The book is an exploration of small unit tactics in a fictional encounter in the Boer War. Lieutenant Backsight Forethought ("BF") and his command of fifty men are given the task to defend Duffer's Drift, a natural ford to a river. A large force of Boers, unknown to BF, is moving toward his position. This scenario is played out six separate times, in six "dreams." In the early scenarios, BF and his British troops are ignominiously defeated. After each defeat, BF learns lessons and adapts his strategy for the later encounters. The later dreams end more inconclusively, and in the final dream, BF and his command successfully hold out long enough to be relieved. The book encourages critical thinking and careful use of position and terrain to mount a successful defence.



Taken from the IBOLC Reading List

Following the invasion of Iraq in 2003 the U.S. military found itself in a battle with a lethal and adaptive insurgency, where the divisions between enemy and ally were ambiguous at best, and working with the local population was essential for day-to-day survival. From the lessons they learned during multiple tours of duty in Iraq, two American veterans have penned *The Defense of Jisr al-Doreaa*, an instructional parable of counterinsurgency that addresses the myriad of difficulties associated with war in the postmodern era.

synopsis from: www.amazon.com

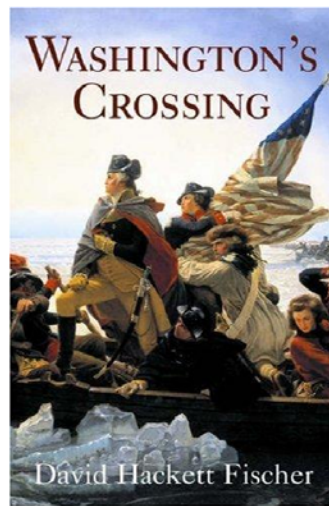


Taken from the MCOE Reading List

A modern day Iraq/Afghanistan tactics, techniques and scenarios in the tradition of "The Defence of Duffer's Drift".

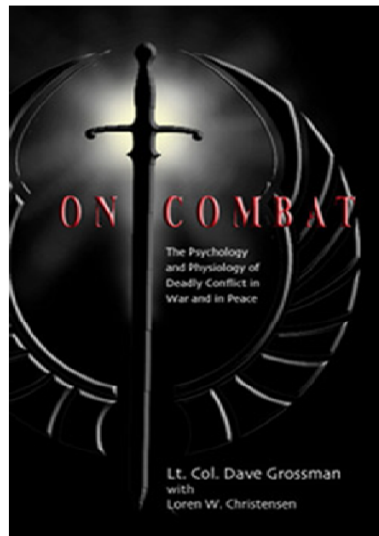
-Call (Center for Army Lessons Learned) Newsletter June 2008 issue

<http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/cac2/call/docs/08-39/toc.asp>



Taken from the Army Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List

Six months after the Declaration of Independence, the American Revolution was all but lost. A powerful British force had routed the Americans at New York, occupied three colonies, and advanced within sight of Philadelphia. Yet, as David Hackett Fischer recounts in this riveting history, George Washington-and many other Americans-refused to let the Revolution die. On Christmas night, as a howling nor'easter struck the Delaware Valley, he led his men across the river and attacked the exhausted Hessian garrison at Trenton, killing or capturing nearly a thousand men. A second battle of Trenton followed within days. The Americans held off a counterattack by Lord Cornwallis's best troops, then were almost trapped by the British force. Under cover of night, Washington's men stole behind the enemy and struck them again, defeating a brigade at Princeton. The British were badly shaken. In twelve weeks of winter fighting, their army suffered severe damage, their hold on New Jersey was broken, and their strategy was ruined. Fischer's richly textured narrative reveals the crucial role of contingency in these events. We see how the campaign unfolded in a sequence of difficult choices by many actors, from generals to civilians, on both sides. While British and German forces remained rigid and hierarchical, Americans evolved an open and flexible system that was fundamental to their success. The startling success of Washington and his compatriots not only saved the faltering American Revolution, but helped to give it new meaning.



Taken from MCOE Reading List

On Combat looks at what happens to the human body under the stresses of deadly battle the impact on the nervous system, heart, breathing, visual and auditory perception, memory - then discusses new research findings as to what measures warriors can take to prevent such debilitations so they can stay in the fight, survive, and win. A brief, but insightful look at history shows the evolution of combat, the development of the physical and psychological leverage that enables humans to kill other humans, followed by an objective examination of domestic violence in America. The authors reveal the nature of the warrior, brave men and women who train their minds and bodies to go to that place from which others flee. After examining the incredible impact of a few true warriors in battle, On Combat presents new and exciting research as to how to train the mind to become inoculated to stress, fear and even pain. Expanding on Lt. Col. Grossman's popular "Bulletproof mind" presentation, the book explores what really happens to the warrior after the battle, and shows how emotions, such as relief and self-blame, are natural and healthy ways to feel about having survived combat. A fresh and highly informative look at post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) details how to prevent it, how to survive it should it happen, how to come out of it stronger, and how to help others who are experiencing it.

IBOLC HISTORY

The Infantry Basic Officer Leader Course traces its history to the early parts of this century. On the 1st of April 1907, the School of Musketry was formed, and it was located at the Presidio of Monterey, California. This school was moved to Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 1915, where it was re-designated the Infantry School of Arms. On 18 September 1918, the War Department issued orders moving the Infantry School of Arms to an obscure post named Camp Benning and the School's first class of newly commissioned officers arrived on the 2d of December 1918, to "master those weapons which a soldier himself carries on foot." This class was quartered in tents.

In the following year, the 29th Infantry Regiment was founded at Camp Benning for the purpose of training student officers. The Infantry School of Arms recognized the need for a unit of trained cadre and instructors to realistically and correctly demonstrate the tactics and doctrine taught at the school. The Regiment served in this capacity for the next twenty-four years. War Department General Order 7 officially established the Infantry School at Camp Benning, Georgia on 30 January 1920. The expressed mission was "to prepare selected officers to perform Infantry duties required in peace and war with emphasis on the art of command and leadership." During that first year, 702 officers attended the course at Camp Benning, the largest body of students officers assembled in time of peace for training in the art of war during America's first 144 years. In 1940, the Infantry School became a separate part of the post and on 13 November 1941, the Student Training Units were reorganized into two student regiments and trained both officers and enlisted men. By 1942, America had entered World War II and in May of that year, the Infantry School was expanded to three regiments under a Student Brigade. At the war's end in 1945, the Brigade was deactivated, and the Infantry reverted to two training regiments. As the Korean War began in 1951, the Student Brigade headquarters was reactivated. Until 1953, however, there was no Basic Course for Infantry officers. The Student Brigade ran the Infantry School's Officer Candidate School, while officers from other commissioning sources were sent directly to units.

In 1953, the Basic Infantry Officer Course was established, and all newly commissioned Infantry officers, with the exception of OCS officers, attended this course supervised by cadre of the 1st and 2d Student Regiments. This organization remained in effect until 1964, when the Infantry School was re-designated the United States Army Infantry School and the School Brigade was formed with the 2d Student Battalion to administer to students attending the Infantry Officer Basic Course.

The Battalion was re-designated in 1974 as the Basic Officer Training Battalion (BOTB), a provisional command subordinate to The School Brigade, with the mission of training infantry combat platoon leaders. During this time, the program underwent major revisions. MG William G. Lithium, the Commandant of USAIS, directed the basic course be improved so that lieutenants would become experts in weapons, tactics, and maintenance and GEN DePuy, the TRADOC Commander, directed the Infantry School to test an IOBC structured with trainer-cadre assigned to each platoon. This organization was to be based on the Israeli Officer Basic Training system. Through 1977 and 1978, a Provisional Battalion was formed and the Battalion found a permanent home in Building 74 as the 2d Student Battalion, the School Brigade. In June 1982, permanent order 106-1, re-designated the battalion as the 2d Training Battalion (IOBC). The decade of the 1980's was a time of further change and modification for IOBC. In late 1982, a major revision to the course took place adding two additional weeks to the course making it 16 weeks long, which it remains to this day. In 1987, the IOBC line companies from numbered to Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, and Echo companies. On 14 August 1987, in accordance with Permanent Order 94-37, Battalion was re-designated the 2d Battalion, 11th Infantry. On 8 February 1991, the School Brigade was inactivated and re-designated as the 11th Infantry Regiment. 2d Battalion, 11th IN became a part of the newly activated 11th IN Regiment. In 1995, the battalion headquarters moved to its present location in Building 76.

Over the years, the POI continued to change making IBOLC a more physically and mentally demanding course. Since 1907, and throughout this century of change, the IBOLC mission has remained essentially unchanged: To prepare and train Infantry Lieutenants to lead platoons in combat.